



National Association of State Park Directors

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First Day Hikes in America's State Parks Offer Invigorating Start to the New Year *#FirstDayHikes*

Make a New Year's resolution to your health and happiness by kicking off 2019 with an invigorating [First Day Hike](#) at a [state park near you](#). On January 1, all 50 states will participate in the annual national event that encourages everyone to celebrate the New Year with a guided outdoor exploration. Of special note this year, the Ontario Provincial Parks have joined the movement in providing First Day Hikes, uniting with America's State Parks and a number of staff from the National Park Service and local park departments who are also participating.

"America's state parks are stunning year-round, but there's nothing quite like a First Day Hike to really take in the great outdoors and kick off the New Year in a healthy way" said National Association of State Park Directors President Linda Lanterman. "On January 1, grab your family and friends, lace up those boots and seek out a new adventure at a state park. Friendly staff and spectacular views will surely be waiting for you!"

Adventurers in North Carolina can hike beside the highest spring in the eastern United States at [Mount Mitchell State Park](#), learn about the fire dependent ecosystem of the [Pine Barrens](#) with a New Jersey Woodland Steward, check off a New Year's resolution by snowshoeing at [Mirror Lake State Park](#) in Wisconsin, or search for signs of wildlife at [Robertsville State Park](#) in Missouri. Details on every state's hikes are located at www.StateParks.org. "America's State Parks invite the young and old alike to discover the serenity and natural beauty through exploring the beautiful public lands in every state," the National Association of State Park Directors Executive Director Lewis Ledford said. "Hiking offers inspiring ways to improve your physical and mental health, while exploring these beautiful places in every state."

Annual hikes on New Year's Day at the Blue Hills Reservation, a state park in Milton Massachusetts, began more than 25 years ago and are credited with the movement that has become First Day Hikes. Again last year, thousands of Americans participated in both traditional hikes and new experiences in many parks.

Join the fun! During the event, park rangers, naturalists and volunteers will share their knowledge of each state's unique natural and cultural features. You are encouraged to share your adventures on social media with #FirstDayHikes.

Hike safely. Hiking during the winter can be fun, as long as you follow cold-weather tips provided by the [American Hiking Society](#). Just a few simple essentials include dressing in layers, wearing raingear, a hat and appropriate footwear and carrying food and water. Sunscreen and sunglasses may be necessary to prevent sunburn from the glare off snow.

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The National Association of State Park Directors promotes and advocates for the state park systems across America in providing for conservation and management of natural and cultural resources, quality outdoor recreation experiences, connecting children and families to nature and the outdoors, and more. With more 8,565 park areas and visitation of more than 807 million annually, the economic impact to local communities is estimated to exceed \$20 billion each year. America's State Parks is an alliance of state park systems in all 50 states.

